

Over \$500,000 Recovered for Vets by Hinchey This Year

Kingston, NY -- With tens of thousands of veterans living throughout Congressman Maurice Hinchey's (D-NY) 22nd District, problems with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) claims, paperwork, awards and commendations, benefits and other service related issues are sure to arise. A Navy veteran himself, Hinchey has assembled a team of dedicated caseworkers with the experience and expertise needed to ensure that those who served in our armed forces are well-served by federal agencies. This year alone, Hinchey's offices have recovered \$523,000 in benefits owed to local veterans who have reached out to the congressman for help when they ran into bureaucratic hurdles and dead ends.

"There are so many veterans in our part of New York who have had trouble with paperwork and difficulty securing the benefits they are owed," said Hinchey. "It's just not right when someone who served on the front lines in Afghanistan, Iraq or in another past war has to fight a new battle to secure the benefits they are owed when they return home. I've put together a dedicated staff, and I've told them to make helping our veterans their top priority - and they do an outstanding job. Anyone who is having trouble with the VA or the Department of Defense should contact my office. There is a lot we can do to help."

Earlier this year, Hinchey assisted Frank Gualtieri, a 90-year-old World War II veteran of Port Ewen, New York. Frank had experienced a delay in the processing of his pension claim. His daughter, Linda Corsones, reached out to Hinchey's office and requested assistance with his case. Hinchey worked to expedite the claim, and it was quickly approved.

Hinchey also helped Donna Federau, a Kingston, New York widow of a recently deceased Vietnam Veteran who was experiencing financial hardship after the loss of her husband. After the VA delayed processing her claim, Hinchey worked to immediately secure money for burial expenses, and later obtained additional benefits, including a retroactive payment of over \$13,000.

In Orange County, Hinchey helped Epifanio Salcedo of Middletown, New York obtain an increase in his service connected compensation. Hinchey's office is now assisting Salcedo in obtaining additional benefits through the VA.

In Binghamton, Hinchey assisted Joseph P. Russell, a disabled Desert Storm/Desert Shield veteran, with obtaining subsistence allowance funds entitled to him through the VA's Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Service program. Congressman Hinchey's office contacted the VA and helped obtain the funds, allowing Russell to move closer to his goal of obtaining a degree in social work, which he hopes to use to assist fellow service members as they return home.

A veteran of the U.S. Navy, Hinchey served in the Pacific on the destroyer U.S.S. Marshall after graduating from high school. As a strong proponent of veterans issue on the House Appropriations Committee, Hinchey traveled to Afghanistan in December 2001 following the U.S. invasion. Two years ago, during the week of Thanksgiving, he visited the country for a third time to have a holiday dinner with the troops. He later made a fourth trip to the country.

Hinchey was a strong supporter of updating the G.I. Bill for the 21st Century, which provided the greatest overhaul of the G.I. Bill in over 20 years. As a member of the Appropriations Committee, Hinchey voted to provide advanced appropriations for the VA to stabilize funding for medical care to veterans. Prior to this change, the VA lacked the ability to budget ahead, causing backups and delays in the delivery of services. Since 2007, Hinchey has voted to add \$23 billion for veterans' health care and services. Hinchey is currently working to pass legislation that would provide tax incentives to businesses that hire unemployed veterans. He is also working to pass the Veteran's I.D. Card Act, which would allow Veterans to prove their prior military service.